

Argument:

In the final office action the examiner noted that the applicant "failed to address why the Thomson patent would not anticipate claims 1-3 and 7-9." Applicant respectfully disagrees. While it is true that the response does not include a specific discussion of the allowability of the claims over the Thomson reference in the section discussing the rejections of claims 1-3 and 7-9, other sections of the response point out those claim limitations that are not met by Thomson. For example, page 6, lines 14-15 of the response state that "Thomson does not disclose a telecentric optical system." As is discussed in the currently pending application, a telecentric optical system is one in which an aperture is positioned at about the image side focal plane of the lens. Since claims 1-3 and 7-9 each require such an arrangement (i.e., an aperture positioned at about the image side focal plane of the lens or, in the case of claim 8, "telecentric aperture stop means") and since Thomson fails to disclose an optical system meeting these limitations, none of the claims 1-3 and 7-9 are anticipated by Thomson.

Applicant also notes that the rejections of the claims over the Thomson reference are in the alternative (and are cumulative) to those made over the Matsunami reference. That is, in the office action, paper number 8, dated December 12, 2000, the examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 7-9 under Section 102(b) first over Matsunami, then over Thomson in the alternative. In the response, applicant specifically addresses the rejections in view of Matsunami, stating that Matsunami fails to disclose an arrangement wherein the aperture stop is positioned so that it is substantially co-planar with the image side focal plane of the lens. This is the same limitation that is not met by the Thomson reference. That is, Thomson also fails to disclose a telecentric optical system, i.e., a system which includes an aperture positioned at about the image side focal plane of the lens.

Finally, applicant also respectfully asks the examiner to reconsider his statements with regard to the term "telecentric"

and that claim 8 does not recite a telecentric lens. Applicant does not assert that claim 8 includes a telecentric lens. Claim 8 recites "telecentric aperture stop means." What applicant is trying to clarify is that an optical system (i.e., an optical system involving a lens and an aperture) is telecentric when the aperture is positioned at about the image side focal plane of the lens. Stated another way, the term "telecentric" describes an optical system that includes an aperture stop positioned at about the image side focal plane of the lens. This limitation is contained in each of the currently pending claims and is not shown or suggested by either the Matsunami or the Thomson references.

Applicant believes that all the claims now pending in this patent application continue to be allowable and that all other problems raised by the examiner have been rectified. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the examiner to reconsider his rejections and to grant an early allowance. If any questions or issues remain to be resolved, the examiner is requested to contact the applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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